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Notes from Vancouver, B. C.

by Kenneth Racey.

On January 2, 1921 many different varieties of birds were noticed in Kitsilano between Point Gray Road and the beach, and on English Bay. The weather was fine, but the sky was overcast and a light easterly wind was blowing.

Some time ago a bird sanctuary was made of English Bay and Burrard Inlet from a line drawn between Point Gray and Point Atkinson inland to the Second Narrows and in this safe retreat are to be found a great number of different species of water birds.

On thia particular morning with the aid of field glasses the following birds were observed:

1 Horned Grebe (Colymbus auritus)
1 Pacific Loon (Gavia pacifica)
5 Red-breasted Merganers (Mergus serrator)
60-70 Scaup Ducks (Marila marila)
10-12 Barrow's Golden-eye (Clangula islandica)
50-60 White-winged Scoters (Oidemia deglandi)
200-250 Surf Scoters (Oidemia perspicilliata)
1 Great Blue Heron (Ardea herodias fannini)

In the bushes along the shore and Point Gray Road, were many small birds. Those chiefly noted were:

2 Gairdner's Woodpeckers (Dryobates pubescens gairdneri) ♂ & ♀.
16 ? Shufeldt's ? Junco (Junco Hyemalis connectens ?)
5 Sooty Song Sparrows (Melospiza melodia rufina)
1 Oregon Towhee (Pipilo maculatus oregonus)
1 Seattle Wren (Thryomanes bewicki calophonus)
A large flock of Oregon Chickadees (Penthestes atricapillus occidentalis)

The Woodpeckers, Juncos, Wren and Chickadees were all feeding on the larva contained in the budding nests of the gall fly or mite on the wild raspberry and salmon berry canes.

On visiting the same place two weeks later, the usual number of Surf and White-winged Scoters and Blue-bills were present, as well as a large flock of Horned Grebe. A pair of Buffle-heads (Charitonetta albeola) was observed, these being the first I had seen in English Bay this winter. Two Pacific Loons (Gavia pacifica) were in evidence as was also a Kingfisher (Ceryle alcyon).

While watching the various ducks in the water at the foot of Collingwood Street, a female Scaup Duck turned over on her back to peak and preon her breast feathers; later she righted herself and went on feeding. From the position above the water (50 or 40 feet), the ducks could be seen diving and feeding at the bottom. They appeared to use both feet and wings when diving and to hold themselves under water while exploring the bottom for food.

No American Scoters (Oidemia americana) have been seen this winter, but Mr. Hurd, Chief Game Warden, states it is still a little early for these birds to come to English Bay, and that there are a great many at the mouth of the Fraser River.